

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

DIEGO DE LEON MEJIA

:
:
:
: Mag. No. 21-13138
:
:
: **CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

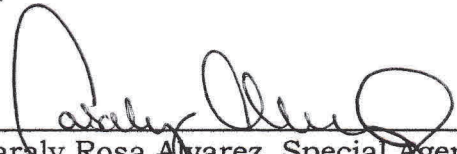
I, Caraly Rosa Alvarez, being duly sworn, state the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief:

SEE ATTACHMENT A


I further state that I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and that this Complaint is based on the following facts:

SEE ATTACHMENT B

continued on the attached page and made a part hereof.

 3/18/2021
Caraly Rosa Alvarez, Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Special Agent Alvarez attested to this Complaint by telephone pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 4.1(b)(2)(A) on March 18, 2021 in New Jersey.

 3/18/2021
HONORABLE LEDA DUNN WETTRE
United States Magistrate Judge

ATTACHMENT A

COUNT ONE

(Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution)

On or about May 31, 2019, in Passaic County, in the District of New Jersey, and elsewhere, the defendant,

DIEGO DE LEON MEJIA,

did knowingly and willfully move and travel in interstate and foreign commerce with the intent to avoid prosecution under the laws of New Jersey for crimes which are felonies under the laws of that state, specifically, one count of Murder in the First Degree, in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:11-3(A)(1) and 2C:2-6(A); one count of Possession of a Weapon for an Unlawful Purpose, in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:39-4a(1) and 2C:2-6(A); and one count of Unlawful Possession of a Handgun, in violation of N.J.S.A. 2C:39-5(B)(1) and 2C:2-6(A).

In violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1073.

ATTACHMENT B

I, Caraly Rosa Alvarez, am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"). I have knowledge of the following facts based upon both my investigation and discussions with other law enforcement personnel and others. Because this affidavit is being submitted for the sole purpose of establishing probable cause to support the issuance of a complaint, I have not included each and every fact known to the government concerning this matter. I have set forth only the facts that I believe are necessary to establish probable cause. Unless specifically indicated, all dates described in this affidavit are approximate, and all conversations and statements described in this affidavit are related in substance and in part.

1. On or about May 16, 2019, law enforcement in Passaic County began to investigate a report of a murder in the vicinity of East 25th Street, Paterson, New Jersey.

2. As part of the investigation, law enforcement reviewed surveillance video footage and observed from the footage an individual later identified as Jose Antonio Vargas ("Vargas") and an individual later identified as Defendant DIEGO DE LEON MEJIA ("DE LEON") following a male ("Victim") down the street. Law enforcement further observed from the footage Vargas and DE LEON engage in what appeared to be a struggle with the Victim and then the flash of a gunshot. Law enforcement observed the Victim fall to the ground, get up and then fall to the ground again while Vargas and DE LEON walk away from the scene.

3. Based upon the above information and additional information learned in the course of the investigation, a warrant was issued on or about May 31, 2019 for DE LEON's arrest. Additionally, law enforcement has learned that charges were filed against Vargas, and a warrant issued for his arrest on or about December 3, 2019. To date, law enforcement has been unable to locate DE LEON at his known address in Paterson, New Jersey, or elsewhere in New Jersey.

4. In or around December 2019, law enforcement received information through at least one source that, following the May 16, 2019 murder, DE LEON fled the state of New Jersey to Pennsylvania and possibly the vicinity of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Law enforcement recently has learned through further investigation that DE LEON has a brother who, based upon information obtained from at least one database available to law enforcement, appears to reside in Pennsylvania and specifically in the area of Stroudsburg. That information associates DE LEON's brother with an address in Stroudsburg as recently as June 2020. Upon information and belief, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania is located approximately fifty (50) miles from Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Based upon my training and experience, I know that fugitives frequently hide in areas with which they are familiar and/or near family and associates who may be able to assist them in evading law enforcement detection and apprehension.

5. Based upon my training and experience, given that the investigation described above indicates that DE LEON has fled the State of New Jersey, there is probable cause to believe that DE LEON has traveled outside of the State of New Jersey to avoid arrest and prosecution for a crime that he allegedly committed in New Jersey.